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NGA, UMSL partner to develop STEM professionals, educators

SPRINGFIELD, Virginia – The National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency and University of Missouri–St. Louis are partnering to create a geospatial talent pipeline that supports student learning from kindergarten through college and beyond.

Under a new education partnership agreement, UMSL faculty and staff will work collaboratively with NGA professionals to develop academic courses and programs in science, technology, engineering and mathematics that will provide students the knowledge and skills needed for careers in geospatial intelligence.

NGA Director Vice Adm. Robert Sharp and UMSL Chancellor Kristin Sobolik signed the agreement Wednesday during the U.S. Geospatial Intelligence Foundation's 2021 Symposium, being held this week at the America's Center Convention Complex.

"We're very serious about recruiting for the workforce of our future – to include increasing diversity and inclusion, and making NGA the gold standard for workplaces in every area," said Sharp.

The partnership will help meet the needs of NGA and the broader geospatial ecosystem growing around the agency's new $1.75 billion west campus near downtown St. Louis.

"As a longtime driver of workforce development in our region, UMSL is committed to adapting our programming and preparing our students to support that growth," said Sobolik. "We envision St. Louis becoming a hub for geospatial technology, not just in Missouri or in the Midwest but globally, and we are eager to work with NGA to help shape that future. We know our students and faculty will benefit greatly from the talent and expertise of NGA professionals."

As part of the partnership, NGA and UMSL plan to collaborate on future workshops or conferences, to be held either on NGA's new campus or at UMSL. NGA will facilitate tours and demonstrations for students and faculty at unclassified facilities on the new campus. It will also suggest research projects suitable for student participation and could provide internship opportunities for students and sabbaticals for faculty members.

Also, NGA and the University of Missouri System have finalized a Collaborative Research and Development Agreement, or CRADA, that will create opportunities for UMSL researchers to collaborate with the agency on geospatial research, training and other initiatives aimed at innovation. The UMSL Geospatial Collaborative, created last year, will help coordinate that work.

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About NGA

NGA delivers world-class geospatial intelligence that provides a decisive advantage to policymakers, warfighters, intelligence professionals and first responders.

NGA is a unique combination of intelligence agency and combat support agency. It is the world leader in timely, relevant, accurate and actionable geospatial intelligence. NGA enables the U.S. intelligence community and the Department of Defense to fulfill the president's national security priorities to protect the nation.

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